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SUBJECT: INTSUM 634 - AUGUST 23, 1978

LONDON FOR GLASPIE
PARIS FOR NICHOLAS MURPHY
OTHER ADDRESSEES FOR CHIEFS OF MISSION

WARNING NOTICE SENSITIVE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED NOT
RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS

1. ISRAEL. BEGIN IS LIKELY TO FEEL UNDER POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS WHEN HE COMES TO CAMP DAVID. THE KEY CONSTRAINT IS IMPOSED BY HIS OWN HERUT PARTY. WHILE BEGIN HISTORICALLY HAS DOMINATED THE MOVEMENT HE FOUNDED IN 1948, THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LEADER AND FOLLOWERS IS ESSENTIALLY A SYMBIOTIC ONE. IN THE PAST, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE ROOM FOR SPECULATION ABOUT THE PRESSURE THE HERUT RANK-AND-FILE MIGHT EXERT ON BEGIN, GIVEN THE HOMOGENEITY OF VIEWS INSIDE HERUT. IT IS ONLY SINCE THE SADAT TRIP TO JERUSALEM THAT DIFFERENCES WITHIN HERUT HAVE SURFACED WHICH BRING THIS QUESTION TO THE FORE.

2. IT IS CLEAR THAT BEGIN ADOPTED AN UNCHARACTERISTICALLY FORTHCOMING APPROACH TO SADAT AFTER THE JERUSALEM TRIP.

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IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT BEGIN'S APPROACH SHOCKED HERUT AND PROMPTED AN EFFORT BY THE HERUT MAINSTREAM TO VETO ANY FURTHER MOVES BY BEGIN TOWARD SADAT. THE HERUT RANK-AND-FILE MADE ITS VIEWS KNOWN AT A STORMY CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING IN JANUARY WHEN SHMUEL KATZ, A HARDLINER WHO BROKE WITH BEGIN OVER THE LATTER'S PLAN FOR WEST BANK AUTONOMY, RECEIVED 40 PERCENT OF THE VOTES FOR A VACANT MINISTERIAL SLOT. IT IS PROBABLE THAT KATZ WOULD HAVE WON HAD BEGIN NOT MADE AN EMOTIONAL APPEAL TO THE COMMITTEE CAPPED BY A THREAT TO RESIGN IF HIS NOMINEE WERE REJECTED.

3. THAT MEETING IS LIKELY TO HAVE HAD A PROFOUND IMPACT ON BEGIN. THE MEMORY OF IT, COUPLED WITH PERIODIC OUTBURSTS OF HERUT FEELING, APPARENTLY CONTINUE TO SET THE PARAMETERS OF HOW FAR BEGIN THINKS HE CAN GO. ALTHOUGH BEGIN MIGHT BE ABLE TO MUSTER A MAJORITY IN THE CABINET AND KNESSET FOR A MORE DOVISH COURSE, HE WOULD HAVE TO VIOLATE THE WILL OF THE HERUT MAINSTREAM TO DO SO. IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT BEGIN WOULD BE PREPARED TO DESTROY HIS OWN CREATION--THE PARTY WHICH EPITOMIZES HIS OWN VALUES.

4. MOREOVER, BEGIN'S CONTROL OVER HERUT IS NOT ABSOLUTE. IT RESTS, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, ON A CONSENSUS THAT BEGIN HAS NURTURED OVER THE YEARS AND SHARES WITH THE PARTY'S RANK-AND-FILE. IF BEGIN GETS TOO FAR OUT IN FRONT OF THIS CONSENSUS, HE PROBABLY DOUBTS THAT HE COULD PULL ALL THE PARTY ALONG WITH HIM.

5. BEGIN'S DEPENDENCE ON THE SUPPORT OF HIS PARTY IS BOTH PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL. ON THE POLITICAL SIDE, THE TRADITIONAL HAWKISH STANCE OF HERUT REPRESENTS THE BELIEFS OF THE ORIENTAL VOTERS WHO FORM THE CORE OF HERUT'S CONSTITUENCY. THESE VOTERS ACCOUNT FOR THE POLITICAL CLOUT OF THE HERUT MAINSTREAM.

6. THE ATTITUDES OF THE ORIENTAL VOTERS ARE DEEPLY
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ROOTED IN THEIR NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES WHERE MOST OF THEM WERE BORN, AS WELL AS IN THEIR FEELING THAT, PRIOR TO BEGIN'S ELECTION AS PRIME MINISTER, THEIR NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS HAD BEEN TOO LONG NEGLECTED. BEGIN IS POPULAR AMONG THESE VOTERS BECAUSE HE APPEALS TO THEIR HAWKISH FOREIGN POLICY INSTINCTS AND MAKES THEM FEEL THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS RESPONSIVE. HE CANNOT REVERSE HIS POSITION IN ANY FUNDAMENTAL WAY WITHOUT UNDERCUTTING HIS POLITICAL BASE.

7. THE HERUT MAINSTREAM--OF WHICH EZER WEIZMAN IS NOT A PART--IS PROBABLY UNWILLING TO ACCEPT TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS IN THE WEST BANK. IT WOULD REJECT ANYTHING AS FORTHCOMING AS THE ALLON PLAN. INDEED, IT IS DIFFICULT TO ENVISAGE HOW A MAJORITY WITHIN HERUT FOR EVEN SYMBOLIC CONCESSIONS IN THE WEST BANK MIGHT BE CRYSTALLIZED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. (CONFIDENTIAL)

8. EGYPT. EMBASSY CAIRO HAS REPORTED THAT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF OCCASIONAL PERSONAL CRITICISM OF BEGIN IN THE LITTLE-READ ENGLISH-LANGUAGE GAZETTE, THE PRESS CONTINUES TO TREAT PRE-CAMP DAVID ACTIVITIES IN A MODERATE TONE. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN A NOTABLE ABSENCE OF ANTI-ISRAELI RHETORIC IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS FROM SADAT ON DOWN. AMERICAN NEWSMEN, HOWEVER, HAVE TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT MANY OF THEIR EGYPTIAN COLLEAGUES ARE CHAFING UNDER THE PRESUMMIT RESTRICTIONS. THEY HAVE ASSERTED THAT, IF BEGIN OR HIS TOP ADVISORS PUSH MATTERS MUCH FURTHER, THEY BELIEVE THAT THE WRAPS WILL BE TAKEN OFF THE EGYPTIAN MEDIA. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

9. JORDAN. ALTHOUGH JORDANIAN-SYRIAN RECONCILIATION
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EFFORTS RECEIVED AN IMPETUS FROM HUSSEIN'S VISIT TO DAMASCUS SEVERAL WEEKS AGO AND THE SUBSEQUENT CONVOCATION OF THE SYRIAN-JORDANIAN HIGHER COMMITTEE, THE SYRIANS PROBABLY WERE DISTURBED BY THE KING'S ANNOUNCED SUPPORT FOR

THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT. SO FAR, HOWEVER, DAMASCUS HAS NOT RAISED SUFFICIENT ALARM FOR THE JORDANIANS TO COMMUNICATE SERIOUS UNEASE TO US.

10. INSTEAD, THE JORDANIANS STILL APPEAR CONFIDENT THAT, BY UNCLOGGING COMMUNICATIONS LINKS TO DAMASCUS, THEY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN TAKING OUT INSURANCE AGAINST A POSSIBLE FAILURE OF THE SADAT INITIATIVE. NEVERTHELESS, DESPITE HIS ATTEMPT TO DRAW CLOSE TO ASSAD, HUSSEIN WILL TRY TO MAINTAIN HIS BALANCE BY LOOKING FOR WAYS TO APPEAR RESPONSIVE TO SAUDI AND US PRESSURES.

11. FOR THEIR PART, THE SYRIANS ARE PROBABLY ASSESSING THE IMPLICATIONS OF HUSSEIN'S CAMP DAVID STATEMENT TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE JORDANIANS ALREADY ARE BACKING AWAY FROM THEIR PLEDGE TO COORDINATE POLICY ISSUES WITH DAMASCUS. IF ASSAD CONCLUDES THAT THE RESULTS OF THE UPCOMING SUMMIT ARE INIMICAL TO SYRIAN INTERESTS, HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO EXERT PRESSURE UPON HUSSEIN TO PREVENT JORDAN FROM ASSOCIATING ITSELF WITH PEACE APPROACHES THAT UNDERCUT THE SYRIAN POSITION.

12. AS FOR THE EGYPTIANS, IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER THEY RETAIN ANY ILLUSIONS THAT THEY CAN DEPEND UPON THE JORDANIAN MONARCH FOR SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT ON CRUCIAL PEACE ISSUES.

13. IN WHAT THE LOCAL PRESS HAS BILLED AS A MINOR RESHUFFLE, PRIME MINISTER BADRAN APPOINTED TWO NEW CABINET MINISTERS AND SHIFTED THE PORTFOLIO OF A THIRD. EMBASSY AMMAN COMMENTED THAT THE TWO NEWCOMERS, NEITHER OF WHOM ARE SPECIALISTS IN THEIR FIELD, ARE HARDLINE EAST BANK
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NATIONALISTS. IT ADDED THAT THE KING MAY HAVE SELECTED THEM PARTLY IN ORDER TO SOOTHE EAST BANKERS WHO HAVE TRADITIONALLY OPPOSED FURTHER INVOLVEMENT WITH THE WEST BANK. IN OUR VIEW, THIS UNDERLINES THE DIFFICULTIES HUSSEIN MUST OVERCOME BEFORE HE CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE PEACE TALKS. (CONFIDENTIAL)

14. SYRIA. THE SYRIANS VIEW THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES VOTE AGAINST THE PROPOSED \$90 MILLION US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AS AN EFFORT TO PUNISH PRESIDENT ASSAD FOR HIS OPPOSITION TO THE EGYPTIAN PEACE INITIATIVE. CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN US AND SYRIAN OFFICIALS IN DAMASCUS INDICATE THAT THE HOUSE VOTE HAS ALREADY DAMAGED US-SYRIAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. ASSAD REPORTEDLY TOLD A VISITING SAUDI OFFICIAL LAST WEEK THAT HE VIEWS THE VOTE AS A BLATANT PRESSURE TACTIC.

15. THE HOUSE VOTE HAS UNDERMINED ASSAD'S POLICY OF

CAUTIOUSLY IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE US AND THE WEST. IF THE SENATE DOES NOT RESTORE THE AID, THIS POLICY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE FURTHER DAMAGED. IN THE RULING BAATH PARTY, LEFTIST CRITICS OF ASSAD'S OPENING TO THE WEST FEEL VINDICATED BY THE VOTE AND WILL PROBABLY ADVISE ASSAD TO UPGRADE RELATIONS WITH THE USSR.

16. IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS ASSAD IS UNLIKELY TO ALTER SIGNIFICANTLY HIS POLICY TOWARD THE PEACE TALKS OR LEBANON BECAUSE OF THE AID CUTOFF. REPORTS THAT ASSAD CONSIDERED BREAKING RELATIONS WITH THE US ARE PROBABLY EXAGGERATED. HE WILL PROBABLY BE MORE SUSPICIOUS OF US MOTIVES AND ACTIONS IN LEBANON AND MAY BE LESS WILLING TO COMPROMISE ON ISSUES SUCH AS THE STATUS OF SYRIA'S SMALL JEWISH COMMUNITY, WHOSE SITUATION HAS BEEN IMPROVING IN RECENT
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YEARS. HE MAY NOW OPPOSE FURTHER STEPS TOWARDS FREER JEWISH EMIGRATION, FOR EXAMPLE. (CONFIDENTIAL)

17. LIBYA. ACCORDING TO RECENT ESTIMATES THERE ARE NOW 1,350 SOVIET ADVISORS/TECHNICIANS IN LIBYA--APPROXIMATELY DOUBLE THE FIGURE AS OF EARLY TO MID 1977. THE COMPOSITION IS BELIEVED TO BE: AIR FORCE-150; AIR DEFENSE-600 (TENTATIVE-MAYBE TOO HIGH); NAVY-100; ARMY-300 (TENTATIVE-MAYBE TOO LOW); CIVILIANS-200.

18. AIR FORCE PERSONNEL ARE ASSIGNED TO LIBYAN BASES AS ADVISORS OR MAINTENANCE TECHNICIANS WHERE MIG-21, MIG-23, AND MIG-25, AS WELL AS SU-22, AND TU-22 AIRCRAFT ARE EITHER DEPLOYED OR ASSEMBLED. SOVIET AIR DEFENSE PERSONNEL ARE CONCENTRATED PRINCIPALLY IN OR AROUND TUBRUQ IN EASTERN LIBYA WITH THE REMAINDER IN THE BENGAZI AND THE TRIPOLI AREAS. MOST OF THE SOVIET NAVAL PERSONNEL ARE BASED IN TUBRUQ WHERE THEY FUNCTION AS ADVISORS OR MAINTENANCE MEN ON LIBYA'S FOXTROT SUBMARINES AND OSA II PATROL BOATS.

19. SOVIET PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO THE LIBYAN ARMY WERE, UNTIL RECENTLY, INVOLVED MAINLY IN VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND WEAPONS INSTRUCTION. HOWEVER, SEVERAL RECENT INDICATIONS SUGGEST SOVIETS ARE ASSIGNED TO LIBYAN ARMY UNITS DOWN TO BATTALION LEVEL, AS ADVISORS. IF THIS IS CORRECT, THE ESTIMATE OF 300 MAYBE LOW.

20. SOVIET CIVILIAN ADVISORS, MOST OF WHOM HAVE ARRIVED IN LIBYA SINCE LATE 1977, ARE INVOLVED IN VARIOUS LIBYAN AGRICULTURAL SCHEMES, OR ARE ATTACHED TO THE LIBYAN ATOMIC ENERGY PROGRAM, OR ARE INVOLVED IN GEOLOGIC SURVEY, AND OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES. (SECRET/NOFORN) CHRISTOPHER

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